

Message Text

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12

ACTION SS-25

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R 110950 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8056
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
USINT CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 2872

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, IS

SUBJECT: EBAN REVIEW OF MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT SITUATION

1. SUMMARY. IN REVIEWING MIDDLE EAST SITUATION APRIL 10 FOR CHARGE, EBAN REITERATED LONGSTANDING ISRAELI INTERPRETATIONS, OFFERED NO NEW IDEAS, AND GAVE EVERY INDICATION HE SEES NO WAY AND NO NEED FOR ISRAEL TO TRY TO MOVE SITUATION OFF DEAD CENTER. HE ACKNOWLEDGED CURRENT HARDNESS OF EGYPTIAN POSITION BUT DISMISSED POSSIBILITY OF DISINTEGRATION OF SADAT REGIME OR EGYPTIAN RESORT TO NEW FIGHTING AND SAID TOUGHNESS MAY WELL BE PRELUDE TO GREATER EGYPTIAN FLEXIBILITY LATER ON. AS FOR KING HUSSEIN, EBAN SAID ISRAEL DOES NOT WANT TO ENCOURAGE HIM TO MOVE TOWARD ACCOMMODATION BEFORE THERE IS PROGRESS WITH EGYPT AND STRESSED HUSSEIN HIMSELF SEES NO URGENCY AND KNOWS THAT TIME IS NOT OPERATING AGAINST HIM. END SUMMARY.

2. EBAN INVITED CHARGE FOR GENERAL REVIEW OF MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT SITUATION APRIL 10. HE DEVOTED HIS ATTENTION PRIMARILY TO EGYPT, EXPLAINING AT LENGTH WHY HE CONTINUES HOLDING
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BELIEVES ISRAEL AND US SHOULD SEEK TO PUT INITIATIVE ON CAIRO TO ALTER EXISTING MIDDLE EAST SITUATION. HE TOOK UP AND THEN

DISMISSED ONE BY ONE THE ARGUMENTS AS HE SEES THEM AGAINST SUCH A STAND- PAT POLICY: A) DANGER OF OVERTHROW OF SADAT REGIME, B) DANGER OF EGYPTIAN RESORT TO MILITARY ACTION, C) APPEAL BY SADAT TO EUROPEANS TO ALTER SITUATION, D) SADAT- INDUCED SOVIET PRESSURES IN MIDDLE EAST, AND E) HARM TO KING HUSSEIN OF CONTINUATION OF MIDDLE EAST IMPASSE.

3. SADAT REGIME INSTABILITY AND HARDENING EGYPTIAN LINE. EBAN INSISTED THAT ALTHOUGH SADAT IS PASSING THROUGH DIFFICULT PERIOD, SITUATION IS NOT DANGEROUS, SINCE EGYPTIAN STUDENTS AND INTELLECTUALS DO NOT HAVE ARMY OR WORKER SUPPORT, AND SADAT HAS EFFECTIVELY ALLIED OFFICER CORPS TO HIS REGIME THROUGH PRIVILEGES. EBAN ACKNOWLEDGED INTERNAL PROBLEMS HAD CAUSED SADAT LATELY TO TALK TOUGH ABOUT US AND TO HARDEN HIS LINE ON SETTLEMENT ISSUES, AS SHOWN INTER ALIA BY NEWSWEEK INTERVIEW, WITH DEMAND FOR ADVANCE COMMITMENT NOT ONLY ON RETURN OF SINAI TO EGYPT BUT ALSO ON TOTAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL. EBAN NOTED IN PASSING THAT DISTINCTION BETWEEN FULL EGYPTIAN SOVEREIGNTY OVER SINAI AND FULL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL WAS NOT LOST ON SADAT, VARIOUS EUROPEANS HAVING PROBED THIS DISTINCTION WITH EGYPTIANS RECENTLY LOOKING FOR AVENUES OF ISRAEL- EGYPT COMPROMISE. THEREFORE, SADAT' S REJECTION OF PRES NIXON' S CALL FOR RECONCILIATION OF EGYPTIAN SOVEREIGNTY WITH ISRAELI SECURITY AND HIS REMARK THAT HE WOULD NOT TOLERATE ISRAELIS LURKING AROUND SINAI AFTER SETTLEMENT WERE SIGNIFICANT. NEVERTHELESS, ALL THIS COULD CHANGE IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE, EBAN SAID, SINCE IN CASE OF EGYPT TOUGH RHETORIC OFTEN DOES NOT ACCORD WITH REAL ATTITUDES. IF SADAT' S MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN REGIME AT HOME, SUCH AS ASSUMING NEW POWERS FOR HIMSELF, ARE ACCOMPANIED NOW BY HARDER POSTURE ON SETTLEMENT ISSUES, THIS DOES NOT PRECLUDE GREATER EGYPTIAN FLEXIBILITY LATER ON, EBAN ADDED.

4. EGYPTIAN RESORT TO MILITARY ACTION. EBAN GAVE THREE REASONS WHY EGYPT WOULD NOT TRY ONE- TIME HIT- AND- RUN MILITARY ASSAULT: SADAT' S RATIONALITY, SATISFACTION OF EGYPTIAN MILITARY WITH PRESENT SITUATION, AND ABSENCE OF SOVIET BACKING FOR SUCH SCHEME. EBAN SAID SADAT HAS COME TO RECOGNIZE HE CANNOT EXPECT LIMITED RETALIATION FOR LIMITED ATTACK, AND MOST PROMINENT EGYPTIAN COMMENTATORS HAVE COME OUT AGAINST OLD IDEA (AS MAHMOUD RIAD USED TO ADVOCATE) THAT EGYPTIAN DIPLOMACY MUST
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BE BACKED BY SOME SHOOTING. EBAN OPINED THAT EGYPTIANS LEARNED SOMETHING FRM WATCHING LATER STAGES OF VIETNAM CONFLICT. AS FOR OFFICER CORPS, NO WAR NO PEACE IS GOOD DEAL, SINCE OFFICERS KNOW WAR WOULD MEAN HUMILIATION AND PEACE WOULD MEAN DIMUNITION OF THEIR ELITE STATURE. AND FOR REASONS EBAN TOOK UP LATER, HE BELIEVED SOVIETS HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT THEY WOULD NOT UNDERWRITE EGYPTIAN MILITARY ADVENTURE.

5. EUROPEAN PRESSURES. EBAN SAID SADAT HAD PROVEN TO HIM-

SELF THIS WINTER THAT WESTERN EUROPE CANNOT SOLVE HIS PROBLEM. EVEN FRENCH HAVE NOW TAKEN POSITION OF REALISTIC FATALISM. EBAN THOUGHT MEDICI HAD SUMMED UP SITUATION IN SAYING EUROPE HAS WEALTH BUT NO STRATEGIC POWER, MEANING EUROPE COULD HELP EGYPT AFTER A SETTLEMENT BUT COULD NOT HELP BRING SETTLEMENT ABOUT. MEDICI COULD ONLY SUGGEST IDEA OF MASSIVE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AID TO EGYPT IF EGYPTIANS REOPEN CANAL, AN IDEA FOR WHICH MEDICI FELT HE HAD US ENCOURAGEMENT, BUT TO WHICH HE HAD RECEIVED LUKEWARM BRITISH AND FRENCH REACTIONS. EBAN NOTED IN PASSING THAT DISPATCH OF ISMAIL TO WESTERN CAPITALS THIS WINTER EVIDENTLY EARNED SADAT SHARP CRITICISM FROM QADHAFI FOR ATMOSPHERE OF COMPROMISE THIS ACTIVITY ENGENDERED. THIS MAY HAVE BEEN IMPORTANT FACTOR CONTRIBUTING TO EGYPT'S CURRENT HARD LINE ON SETTLEMENT ISSUES. HOWEVER, ISRAELIS NOW HAVE REPORTS OF SERIOUS LIBYAN- EGYPTIAN STRAIN, AND EBAN FOUND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT UNION SCHEDULED FOR ONLY FIVE MONTHS FROM NOW WOULD COME TO PASS.

6. SOVIET ATTITUDE. EBAN WAS CONVINCED THAT OVERRIDING SOVIET OBJECTIVES ARE CONSOLIDATION OF DETENTE WITH US AND EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE AND THAT SOVIETS WILL NOT LET ARABS GET IN WAY. MOSCOW SEES MIDDLE EAST AS BEARING NOT ONLY ON FIRST OBJECTIVE BUT ALSO ON SECOND, WHERE EUROPEAN INSISTENCE ON GREATER FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IN EUROPE EXTENDS TO ISSUE OF SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRATION. EBAN WAS CONFIDENT SOVIETS WILL NOT GIVE SADAT GROUND- TO- GROUND MISSILES OR HEAVY BOMBERS, WILL NOT USE OWN INTIMIDATION CAPABILITIES TO HEAT UP MIDDLE EAST CRISIS ON ARABS' BEHALF, AND WILL NOT ENCOURAGE CAIRO TO TAKE ANY LIMITED MILITARY ACTION, FOR WHICH EGYPT CAN ONLY EXPECT SOVIET PROPAGANDA SUPPORT. SOVIETS IN EBAN'S VIEW COULD BE INDUCED TO MOVE TO STILL MORE MODERATE ATTITUDE ON MIDDLE EAST BY FURTHER PERIOD OF US STANDING FIRM. AS LONG AS CEASE FIRE HOLDS AND MIDDLE EAST BALANCE IS MAINTAINED, US DOES NOT NEED TO PURSUE ANYONE RE
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MIDDLE EAST, ACCORDING TO EBAN.

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ACTION SS-25

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R 110950 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8057

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
USINT CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
47\$5:/ AMEMBASSY LONDON 2040
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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EXDIS

7. HUSSEIN. EBAN SAID HUSSEIN HAS BEEN MAINTAINING HIS
MODDY POSTURE AND OTHERWISE KEEPING QUIET. EBAN

BELIEVED HUSSEIN FEELS NO URGENCY BECAUSE HIS FEDERATION PROPOSAL
HAS REFURBISHED HIS ARAB CREDENTIALS, HE IS GAINING FAVOR
IN WEST BANK, AND TIME IS NOT OPERATING AGAINST HIM.
EBAN SAID GOI DECISION APRIL 8 TO KEEP
EXISTING POLICY AGAINST ISRAELI PURCHASES OF WEST
BANK LAND SHOWS LEISURELY JORDANIAN APPROACH BASED ON ASSUMP-
TION NOTHING IRREVOCABLE WILL HAPPEN IS JUSTIFIED. ISRAEL DOES
NOT WANT TO PUT PRESSURE ON HUSSEIN TO MOVE TOWARD SETTLE-
MENT BEFORE THERE IS PROGRESS WITH EGYPT OUT OF CONCERN THAT IN
THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, ARRANGEMENT WITH JORDAN MIGHT COLLAPSE
BECAUSE OF LACK OF INTER- ARAB SUPPORT. ISRAEL COULD NOT GIVE
JORDAN FULL SATISFACTION IN PEACE SETTLEMENT BECAUSE IN ADDITION
TO UNPOPULATED AREAS, SUCH AS JORDAN VALLEY REGIONS, ISRAEL WOULD
NEED SOME POPULATED AREAS, AND THIS WOULD AFFECT HUSSEIN.

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8. COMMENT. IN PAINTING THIS OPTIMISTIC SCENE FOR PURPOSE
OF JUSTIFYING STAND- PAT POLICY FOR BOTH ISRAEL AND US RE MIDDLE
EAST SETTLEMENT, EBAN SEEMED TO HAVE TROUBLE IN FITTING CURRENT
TOUGHNESS OF EGYPTIAN POSITION INTO PICTURE. HIS SUGGESTION THAT
TOUGHNESS IN CAIRO MAY BE PRELUDE TOMORE FLEXIBILITY LATER ON,
ONCE SADAT HAS BETTER SECURED HIS DOMESTIC POSITION, DID NOT
CARRY CONVICTION. AT ONE POINT EBAN SAID IT WAS HARD TO BE SURE
WHETHER SADAT CONTINUES TO HOPE FOR ACCOMMODATION AND CURRENTLY
IS POSTURING TO BRING ABOUT OUTSIDE PRESSURES ON ISRAEL, OR
WHETHER HE NOW DESPAIRS OF SOLUTION. EBAN NOTED THAT
EGYPTIANS CONTINUE TO LOOK AT SITUATION AS ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL
AND HAVE NEVER FACED SQUARELY QUESTION OF HOW THEY MIGHT
CUT THEIR LOSSES; UF THEX EVER DO, ISRAEL WILL BE VERY AMENABLE,
EBAN SAID.
ZURHELLEN

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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USUN
LONDON

MOSCOW
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